

NUFS Workshop 2010

Newsletter No. 9**Workshop in December**

(Part 1)

Date: December 11, 2010, 10:30-14:30**Venue:** Nagoya NSC College, Room 31**Instructor:** Mathew White (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)**Title:** "Using Video in the Classroom"

Description: The addition of video as a component in language teaching and learning can be extremely motivating. It can also provide students with windows into other cultures as aspects of their nonverbal communication. Even elementary school teachers can benefit from the use of video, as learners can acquire language even before they are able to read. For learners in junior high school and high school, recent studies suggest that the language content found in textbooks does not adequately prepare them for the English found on entrance exams to many of the top universities. In this workshop, participants will explore possibilities in the use of videos and video scripts in assisting their students in meeting their language proficiency goals.

**The number of participants:** 22**1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?**

- Seven words summaries – It's difficult for JHS students to summarize using some sentences, but using seven words or phrases sounds easy and students will try to do this activity positively, because using only words which stand for the scene is easy for them.
- Describe what you see – In JH, we can use this activity particularly for present progressive. I think students can learn "The monkey is swimming", "The monkey is hanging from vines," or "The animals are running around the chameleon", and it's more fun than boring drilling.
- All the activities demonstrated today are very interesting and inspiring. Pass the microphone, seven-word summaries, and the missing scenes can be very useful as a post-reading activity in English I, II or Reading. These activities seem to give less pressure and stress to students than other grammar oriented production activities.
- I liked the partner activity (motto) we did first. This can serve as a good activity at the beginning to spring the interest in the material as well as challenge students to build communication competence.
- The missing scene (creating a dialog) is a good way to produce language. As my partner said, usually students



need much time to decide the situation. As Mathew showed us, when the students are given the situation, that can shorten the time. And also performing in groups is better because students feel relaxed than in front of a big audience.

2. What you learned from today's workshop.

- Video can be very useful in class. Provided it has a purpose, it can be a tremendous vehicle for language learning. I have been skeptical in using video in class, but I am slowly changing my mind on this. I just need to make the video relevant to the class and my teaching and have effective activities come out of these videos.
- Before joining today's workshop, I've thought I cannot make use of videos. But now I learned some ideas which will be made use of in my teaching situation. The activity "The person facing the screen will describe what he/she sees" is useful in order for students to increase their vocabulary. I have to change my mind that using videos will take time.
- I learned seeing once is far more effective than listening and reading ten times. Using films seems to be greatly effective on students who easily lose their interest and motivation to study English like those of my school. Also, all the activities introduced today involve collaborative learning, and I believe they will help create cooperative atmosphere in classroom. I learned it very important to take every opportunity to increase chances to produce language.
- While the presentation today, my partner and I, both JHS teachers, talked about the way we can modify those activities using movies for JH students. I'd like to use Curious George in my class sometime.
- The description of the opening scene written by the teacher was interesting. I had at first assumed that it would be too difficult for my high school students, but looking at it I realized that the grammar was manageable and they could cope with most of the vocabulary after watching the scene.
- It is very difficult for junior high school students to listen and understand English in movies, but we can pick up what suits my students. Pictures tell a lot of things (vocabulary, culture etc.).



3. Questions and Answers

Q (1): Where can I go to on the Internet to find other activity ideas for using video in class?

A: The Internet is always changing, so it's sometimes hard for books, like the one on film by Stempleski and Tomalin, to keep up to date on useful sites. I typed in "Using video in the ESL class + resources" using the Google search engine. The first website I went to was ESL Galaxy <http://www.esl-galaxy.com/video.htm> and it had some worksheets already prepared for using Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Mr. Bean, and many others.

Q (2): Internet is available in classrooms at my school. How can I introduce YouTube to my classroom?

A: I would start with a short but fun animated video. For



example, on Youtube, type in “The Barking Mouse.” (Paul Crane just introduced me to this video. Sharing with colleagues is so wonderful!) There is a narrated video of the Barking Mouse by Len Cabral and Patrick Yurick, which is based on the book by Antonio Sacre. It’s a cute story narrated at a nice pace, and it’s very fun and easy to follow. Let the students watch the whole thing (2 minutes and 42 seconds). Have them listen a second time and write the KEY WORDS to the story. Finally, have the retell the story in pairs. With YouTube, the choices are almost overwhelming. Maybe try introducing a different genre each week, like how to learn from a song or a commercial, etc.

Q (3): Students as well as I are weak at making good use of spoken or colloquial speech. Do you have any good books or ideas to input basics?

A: Actually, videos and children’s books are great for this. As much as I love graded readers, videos are able to introduce colloquial speech and demonstrate when and how such speech is appropriate. My students often watch the entire Full House series. TV dramas are good because they’re shorter than movies.

Q (4): How do you choose the DVD? How do you know which one is good and appropriate for the students?

A: I do my best to pay attention to which videos are already popular in the United States and Japan. Then, I watch them and see if they are videos that I want to recommend. Many times, I look for one seen to focus on a particular theme that we’re covering in class, such as “My Sister’s Keeper,” “John Q” or “7 Pounds” for organ donation. The scene might teach specific vocabulary or just help introduce a perspective on the topic students might not have thought very much about.

Q (5): Do you have a general rule about a video watching time to class-time ratio, or is it just dictated by the particular activity?

A: In general, a little video can go a loooooong way. Most of the time, I can make use of a scene that is about 1 to 3 minutes.



Q (6): Could you elaborate more on how a teacher would assess student progress through these activities?

A: I think teachers need to make it very clear what they want students to get out of the video. For example, videos can be ideal for teaching pronunciation, so students could be required to read the lines of a video aloud and they could be assessed on their ability to pronounce them correctly. They can also be ideal for teaching grammar. Students could be given key words and instructed to write out the lines in correct form, and be assessed on their communicative competence or grammatical accuracy.

Q (7): Do you think it’s necessary to show the subtitles to make students understand all the script in the movie? Actually I couldn’t catch all the sentences in ‘Curious George’, which was a little frustrating for me when we moved on to the next step activity.

A: No. I don’t think students need to catch everything, and a lot of time, the subtitles are not exactly what the characters say. I might show them the 2nd or third time, so students can notice more of the language or I might provide a typed out script (which amazingly, students often read without me asking them!!!) In general, I don’t think they need to understand the entire script. I choose some key lines that I think

will be useful to them. If they get in the habit of watching movies, they will pick up a lot of expressions on their own.

Q (8): Have you ever thought about using Japanese TV programs or movies in your classes? What about programs in other languages? I was thinking that with Japanese language programs, with the sound down, it might work as well. Then, movies or videos in other languages could work by opening up other cultures to the students. I wondered if this would be a beneficial activity as long as they are using English to describe or work with the situation.

A: Yes. One of the topics in our 2nd year Content Based English Curriculum this year was “Monster Parents”. Since there was a TV drama in Japan with the same title, it was perfect for introducing the topic. I was able to find it on the Internet and play it in class with the sound off. There was even a version with English subtitles! As for introducing foreign cultures, it makes total sense.

Q (9): Do you ever make videos with your students; for example, videotaping them performing the 'missing scenes' that they have written? If so, do you do anything with the videos in class, besides just watching them?

A: I do record videos of my students in class, and most recently did record them performing the missing scene. So far, I've only used the videos for the students themselves or their seniors or juniors to watch as near peer role models. However, it would be useful to have them listen to themselves and try a dictation from their own pronunciation. After all, pronunciation is mainly about intelligibility. If they can't understand what they said themselves, then they'll realize the need to pronounce it more clearly. I'm sure there are many more uses, so please let me know if you have any that you recommend.



(Part 2)

Date: December 11, 2010, 14:30-17:00

Venue: Nagoya NSC College, Room 31

Advisors: Nancy Mutoh, Kazuyoshi Sato (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)

Abstract: Monthly report on action research

The number of participants: 14



Workshop in January (Scheduled)

Date: January 22, 2011 10:30-14:30, 14:30-17:00

Venue: NSC College, Room31

Title: “Teaching and Learning Vocabulary: A Way and Ways”

Instructor: Brad Deacon (Nanzan University)

Please email Chihaya ([chiha143\(at-mark\)nufs.ac.jp](mailto:chiha143@nufs.ac.jp)) to attend this workshop.